

Wasatch Emergency Operations Plan Describes Six Possible Hazards

(Second in a Series)

10-5-88

Wasatch commissioners say building needed

By SONNI SCHWINT

Heber City Correspondent

HEBER CITY — The Wasatch County Commission says the county needs a new public safety building. They discussed a few ideas about what it should include and how it can be financed, during a recent commission meeting.

Allen Layton and Wesley Box, Layson Construction, reviewed their experience with planning and constructing many public safety buildings and offered to serve as consultants during preliminary planning of a Wasatch County facility, with-

commission has talked about the need for a new county building, with a jail, courtrooms and offices. Layton and Box told the commission that a new building could be financed through a lease-purchase agreement. They said many small communities build larger jails than they need, then lease the extra beds to state and federal prisoners, at \$45 a day per prisoner, which can be enough to make the payments, and even produce a profit.

Sheriff Edd Thacker suggested the new jail be built to house 24 to 48 prisoners, and contract out half of them.

On the other hand, Layton pointed out that if the county has to begin contracting with other jails to house its prisoners, because of overcrowding, it could become costly and the money would be wasted.

Since the state pays for use of the county courtroom facilities and county employees' time when they are working on state cases, the state might be willing to help fund the court facilities in the new building.

One reason the need for a new public safety building is becoming urgent is that the present eight-bed jail isn't even adequate for local needs and the ACLU is forcing

not comply with the laws governing them.

Sheriff Edd Thacker has already reported problems because of overcrowding at the jail, including violence. He also says even when there are enough beds, the prisoners can't be separated as required by law, which then could result in lawsuits. He cited a recent situation in which a man who was ordered to serve weekends in jail was turned away because there was no room for him.

The commissioners favor constructing the new building west of the courthouse, with a corridor to

Creek.

Earthquakes. The plan lists six earthquakes in the County since 1950 with a Richter magnitude of 3.0 or greater. Three were near Heber City, one at Deer Creek Reservoir, one south of Heber City, and one 12 miles northeast of Strawberry Reservoir (with the highest magnitude, 3.9).

The maximum credible earthquake that could occur in Wasatch County, or along the Wasatch Fault, which would affect the County, would be Richter magnitude 7.5.

Hazardous Materials. Commercial traffic on U.S. 40, through the center of Heber City, transports products from oil fields to the east and other commercial traffic travels on the highway between eastern Utah and western Colorado.

The document identifies eight sites where hazardous materials accidents have occurred in Heber City, and two in Wallsburg, since 1971. 7,600-gallons of crude oil were spilled in five of those accidents. Gasoline, benzene, hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid and asphalt were spilled in the others.

Directions for specific responses to hazardous material accidents are incomplete and will be added to the document later, according to Robert Halloran, State Population Protection Planner, who presented the Plan to the County Commission.

Avalanches. Avalanches have caused more deaths than any other natural hazard in Utah's recorded history, according to the document. Back country skiers and snowmobilers are particularly exposed to the potential of avalanches.

A person trapped in an avalanche must be rescued immediately to survive, so rescue response plans and capabilities are vital.

This is not the first time the

Emergency Service Building Hits Snags

6 Sep 1989

Only one company submitted a bid last week for the contract to construct the new Wasatch County Emergency Services Building on First South and First West in Heber City. The Commissioners decided not to open the bid and to re-advertise the contract with a Sept. 18 deadline. However, now County officials are afraid they may not be able to afford the building as it is designed.

The County has a \$130,000 Community Development Block Grant to fund the construction. The Commission never intended to provide any additional funds and may make changes in the design of the building to be sure the costs

and ambulances, and to provide a meeting room, offices, and storage space for emergency personnel. The plans call for textured cement walls, which are poured at the site, then raised into place and connected. Although the Commission always tries to get local businesses to bid on County contracts, local contractors have no experience with this type of construction and would only be qualified to subcontract for other parts of the project.

Metal and cinderblock construction were also considered before the poured cement was selected, and the Commission may reconsider those possibilities, Berg said.

Contract Awarded For Emergency Services Building

4 Oct 1989

The Wasatch County Commission Monday ratified a contract with Menlove Construction Co., Murray, to build the emergency services building, at First West and First South in Heber City, for \$174,768. It will house County fire engines, ambulances, and other emergency equipment.

Menlove's original bid was \$167,920, for a basic, pre-engineered steel building, plus some bids on additional work. The design engineer, Grant Talbot, Bonneville Engineering, said some of the extras were added to the contract, including electrical floor heaters and

door operators, and modifications to

the building so that a brick facing

can be added.

Originally the building was designed with poured-concrete, a meeting room, and other amenities, but would have cost about \$350,000. So it was redesigned as a simple, basic steel building that

Talbot estimated could be built for \$135,000. The Commissioners said the other rooms and the brick will be added as money becomes available, possibly next year.

\$98,000 of the cost for the building is being provided by an Economic Development Block Grant. The County had budgeted an additional \$45,000, but now will have to come up with \$31,768 more. Jeff Bradshaw, County Clerk, said the money will probably will be borrowed from another County account and repaid during the 1990 budget year.

According to Menlove, the steel structure won't arrive for six or seven weeks, but the foundation can be installed in the meantime and protected from bad weather. The steel can be erected in any kind of weather and the project is expected to be completed by the first of the year.

State officials prepare plan for disasters

By SONNI SCHWINN
Herald Correspondent

HEBER CITY. — A team from the Utah Division of Comprehensive Emergency Management is preparing an emergency management plan to reduce hazards and establish emergency response procedures in case of disasters, like wildfires and flood.

Fred May, Hazard Mitigation Planner for the division, explained Monday to the Wasatch County Commission that there are four phases related to emergency management: hazard mitigation, or reduction; disaster preparedness; disaster response; and disaster recovery. Because of the recent Wasatch Mountain wildfire, the focus of the discussion that followed was on reducing hazards that can lead to wildfires and the risks to firefighters.

May said statewide emergency management procedures are being set up, but that hazards in the county will be specifically addressed. Professionals from eleven state agencies are on the mitigation team that has been evaluating the hazards and making recommendations. May asked Kent Berg, public works director, to organize a local hazard mitigation team to work with the state team to create a county mitigation plan.

The state team develops analysis "trees", that chart the potential progress of an emergency from its beginning as a primary threat to the ultimate disaster that can result. For instance, a wildfire "tree" begins with a campfire, indicates the directions it may spread, charts the sequences of its progress in each direction, and what eventually may be. "We ended."

The "trees" serve as sort of the "blueprint" for the team to make sure

finding and eliminating or reducing "unacceptable threats," like those that threaten life. For example, he said exit signs along mountain roads direct people along escape routes when they become disoriented in a wildfire, including firefighters.

Another wildfire hazard that is unacceptable is to have only one road into mountain subdivisions, said May. He said "safety parks" that are clear of trees and brush, provide protection, but can also be used for recreation, like volleyball and horseshoes. Fire walls separating propane and butane tanks from buildings, brush and trees would protect firefighters as well as structures, May pointed out.

Commissioner Pete Coleman said the county has tried to insist on two access roads into all mountain developments. However, he said Wasatch Mt. State Park officials refused to allow a second road in the Oak Haven development. "That's ridiculous," he said.

May said the state mitigation team identifies lead agencies responsible for following through on its recommendations, from homeowners associations to government agencies, as well as setting time limits for completing the changes.

Coleman said the team should tell Dee Hansen, director of the Dept. of Natural Resources, that a second road should be allowed in Oak Haven and direct him to "tell the state park, this is the way it's going to be."

May agreed and said if Hansen doesn't respond, the team might have to go over his head. "There is some authority attached here that does permit us to ask lead agencies to follow through on our recommendations," said Ren Provost, who

who is a Wasatch County fireman, said one of the main problems in the Wasatch Mountain wildfire was the thick, dry grass and undergrowth that has taken over since park officials "kicked the sheep off." He said the same problem exists in the Strawberry area now that the U.S. Forest Service has banned cattle grazing. He said grazing should be allowed to eliminate the growth.

"That's an excellent suggestion," May responded.

Gary Cornell, who is also on the state mitigation team, said the team plans to meet with the Oak Haven Homeowners Association Wednesday night and to tell them no firefighters will be sent into their canyon under present conditions. He said they will be told what must be done before firefighters will be allowed into the area.

He said assessments of all the developments and private property in the mountain areas had begun before the recent wildfire. He said it was unfortunate the fire occurred before the project had been completed and recommendations could be put into effect.

He said the new grasses being

used in rehabilitating the wildfire site, will stay green longer than the grass that was burned. However, he said the fire moved so fast that it didn't kill the roots of the oak brush, and that it will come back "extremely heavy," excluding other grasses.

Cornell said his agency was not successful in getting financial support from the State Legislature until the Wasatch Mountain wildfire. But the fire brought attention to wildfire concerns and he said he expects to get funds during the next legislative session. He plans to hire a full time fire training officer to provide wildfire training, particularly for people like deputies and public works employees, called "cooperators", who help fight fires but are not primarily firefighters. He also is requesting funds for personal protective equipment for cooperators. He also asked the commission to help lobby the state to set up a fire suppression impact fund to help with the expense of large wildfires.

May said it will take about six months to complete the statewide and local mitigation plans.

City getting new sidewalks

MONA — Mona has received a grant to install new sidewalk from Main Street to Second East on Second North.

The town has received word, according to Mayor Greg Newton, that their application for the sidewalk installation has been approved by the legislature's state pedestrian safety project. The money comes from the Utah De-

partment of Transportation.

The town's share of the \$4,500 curb, gutter and sidewalk project will be \$1,125. UDOT will pay the remaining \$3,375.

Newton said the town must submit plans to UDOT and the mayor must sign off on the plans before the work can begin.

A Year of Change For Search and Rescue

by Dick Baum

11-21-90

Emergency Services

The summer and fall of 1990 has been a busy time for the Wasatch County Search and Rescue. We have only had a couple of searches and they were usually over before they began. The organization itself, however, has grown and changed in several ways.

Last year, we were able to relocate into the old County building at 70 West 100 South and we have been busy ever since fixing the plumbing, wiring, floor, etc. The County repainted the outside and fixed the steps so we are quite pleased. We would like to still make several improvements, however.

Our membership has also grown from about 22 members to 32 members and they are all dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers with a wide array of talents.

Over the last year, we have acquired three large old buses which we have been working to modify to suit our purposes, including new exterior paint and decals. These buses came in handy the first part of September when we had a disastrous mountain fire that killed two local firefighters and burned 3,000 acres. The buses were used to haul firefighters and supplies and were also used to take tours of the fire damage in an attempt to raise funds for the families of the deceased firefighters. This project was very successful raising several thousand dollars.

We are in the process of buying

several high band radios so that most members will have one and everyone now has a pager to improve response time and save calling each member.

Our annual training for hypothermia and avalanches is planned for December along with our Christmas party and Sub for Santa project.

Wasatch enjoys new building

By SONNI SCHWINN

Heber City Correspondent

HEBER CITY — When the Wasatch County Commission approved the plans for the new emergency services building at 100 No. Center Street in Heber City, about two years ago, they hoped to be able to fill it with equipment "some day." That day arrived before the building was completed about two weeks ago.

An estimated 300 to 500 people inspected the building, fire engines, ambulances and other emergency equipment, proudly displayed by emergency personnel during an open house Nov. 14.

Firemen explained the purposes of all the gadgets on one of the bright red fire engines. EMTs took visitors through one of their two new ambulances and described how their equipment saves lives.



The county also has built a command center, a communications vehicle equipped to light up a one-block area, and with three radios and its own power generator, installed by Heber Light and Power Co. It was used during the Wasatch Mountain wildfire and another range fire in the Lake Creek area.

In little more than a year, county EMTs have purchased two new ambulances, using grant money. An old ambulance was retired to Wallsburg for use as a first responder. And they have equipped a four-wheel drive Chevrolet Suburban for transporting patients from mountain areas to roads that are accessible to ambulances.

Search and Rescue volunteers

also opened up their rejuvenated building, east of the new structure, for visitors to inspect and learn about the equipment they have purchased with the proceeds from their annual Fair Days Demolition Derby. Along with the usual emergency medical equipment and supplies, they demonstrated the sonar they use for searching in lakes and the electronic equipment that homes in on signals from downed aircraft.

They also have converted two buses for transporting personnel and equipment and provide their own personal equipment for search and rescue operations, like boats, snowmobiles and four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Wasatch Search and Rescue Called Twice During Bow Hunt

20 Aug 1990

Wasatch County Search and Rescue volunteers responded twice to reports of missing bow hunters last weekend, but the hunters were found before they had to launch a search.

Sheriff Edd Thacker reported one of the missing hunters found his way to a store in Woodland and the other was found by friends.

Need picture of new Bldg

